

Arts and Crafts **TOOLKIT**



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



About the Craft50+ project.

The passion for tradition and creativity, the family heritage and the desire to express themselves through tangible products are some of the main elements that distinguish the craft sector. The element that characterises the craft business are the crafts people, or rather, the activity carried out by the crafts people, who must not limit them only on working personally in the production process, but must run the business in a very comprehensive way. This sector includes very heterogeneous craft activities carried out by professionals who sometimes work informally, parttime or on weekends. The reasons behind this choice can be manifold, starting with the demanding bureaucratic paths, the numerous requirements and the ability to innovate and adapt to the challenges of the new century. Among these challenges, the acquisition of digitization skills emerges as particularly relevant, which on the one hand can help in the innovation process of their products, training and access to funding, and on the other hand are fundamental for the promotion of their products and access to a digital market. However, these difficulties can be even more relevant for craft people older than 50 years old. This group may have received an informal education and have a difficult access to modern marketing tools and digital solutions that are fundamental to increase the visibility and revenues of their business and may impact on success and economic survival.

Based on this, a transnational partnership involving 7 partner organizations from Italy, Portugal, Belgium, Romania, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Georgia developed Craft50+, an international project funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union aimed to provide older craftsmen with new tools to develop their skills in creating and promoting their work, reconciling tradition with innovation thanks to the digital transition.

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Partners

The partnership implementing the Craft50+ project is a unique combination of organizations with expertise in valorisation of traditional crafts and support to business development and organizations dealing with active ageing and support to the social inclusion of persons who are 50+, representing overall seven different countries.

In detail we have:

Anziani e non solo
(project coordinator)
Italy

A social cooperative organization working since 2004 in the field of social innovation in the ageing society. ANS develops programme to support empowerment and social inclusion of seniors, including actions aimed to reduce their digital divide.

Aproximar
Portugal

A non-profit NGO aiming to enhance organisations' social and human capital as a strategy to build their capacity to take advantage of challenges and opportunities raised by the external conditions. Aproximar works, among others, in the fields of active ageing, social economy, entrepreneurship and employability.

Assoc
Romania

A non-profit organization set up in 1995. Its mission is to improve the life conditions of vulnerable groups through education and work. For 25 years, ASSOC has been engaged in fostering the social integration of people with disabilities, Roma communities, migrants and refugees, elderly people and children.

Balkanplan
Bulgaria

Provides consultancy services, technical support and project materialization in the following sectors: Education and training; ICT; Research and technological development; International relations.

Magnetar
Cyprus

A company whose main activities revolve around national and EU co-funded projects in numerous sectors of economy and development.

Georgian Arts & Culture Center
Georgia

One of the leading non-governmental organizations in Georgia working on preservation, promotion and sustainable use of Georgian culture and cultural heritage.

Mad'in Europe
Belgium

A Brussels based company, committed at bringing support to the European crafts sector.

Crafting

is a

journey.



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What we did

The Craft50+ project released the following outcomes and activities addressed to senior craftsmen:

A  **guidebook available** in all project languages to provide them information in relation to:

- o National best practices and case studies related to the use of ICT to support any step of a craft business creation and maintenance
- o Existing support such crafts organizations, funding opportunities and possibilities to improve digital and professional skills
- o National policies and legislation and reported legal challenges;
- o A roadmap that visually offers an overview of the process for creating a successful and innovative craft business when you are over 50

 **Training resources** aimed to equip artisans with skills to boost their business, creativity, and digital readiness. This course allows professionals to learn more about the potential of digital tools to increase visibility, business opportunities and marketing strategies. The training has been successfully piloted in all partner countries and is now ready to be exploited with more users across Europe.



About this toolkit

Across countries there are specific crafts, like ceramics, leather bags or jewellery in Italy, linen, lace and embroidery in Portugal, woollen toys, felt scarf, hand knitted shoes in Georgia or pottery and carpentry in Bulgaria, just to name a few. Despite its singularity, they share the same constraints that relate to being kept alive, passing knowledge to younger generations or adapting to new business markets, thus maintaining and valuing European cultural heritage and identity.

Among the goals of the project there was to contribute to preserve and promote these knowledge and art activities, by creating a visual and digital toolkit aggregating the arts developed by the craftsmen accompanied during the project.

In this toolkit readers will find an introduction to the Craft50+ project and its results, followed by an overview of typical crafts of countries participating to the project and by one-page profiles of the craftsmen involved in project activities.

This output is a resource to show at personal level and with a touched sense what is crafts in Europe, its added-value at territorial level and in the lives of people.

How to use this resource

After the introductory sections, you will access the visual profiles of the Craft50+ craftsmen. Through these, we intended to give visibility to each of them by showing their portrait and briefly describing the meaning that their job has to them from a personal point of view.

However, we also wanted to give our participants the opportunity to showcase their work at international level and that's why we also created a database including further information and details about their activities, their products and the story behind them.

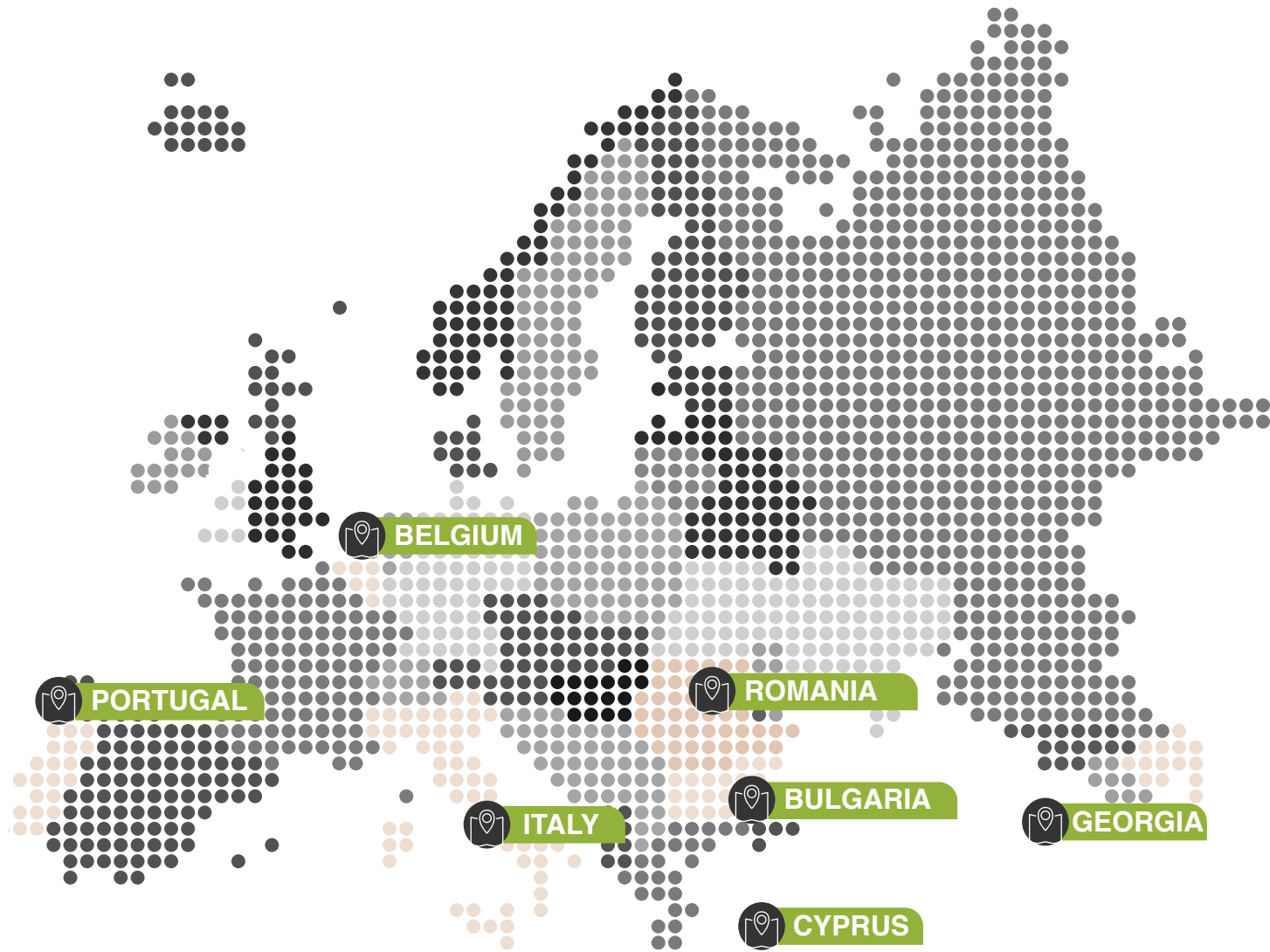
In order to easily access this additional information, can use the QR-codes you will find next to each portrait.

If you use an **Android phone or tablet**: open the built-in camera app. Point the camera at the QR code. Tap the banner that appears on your Android phone or tablet and you will be re-directed to the digital profile of the artisan.

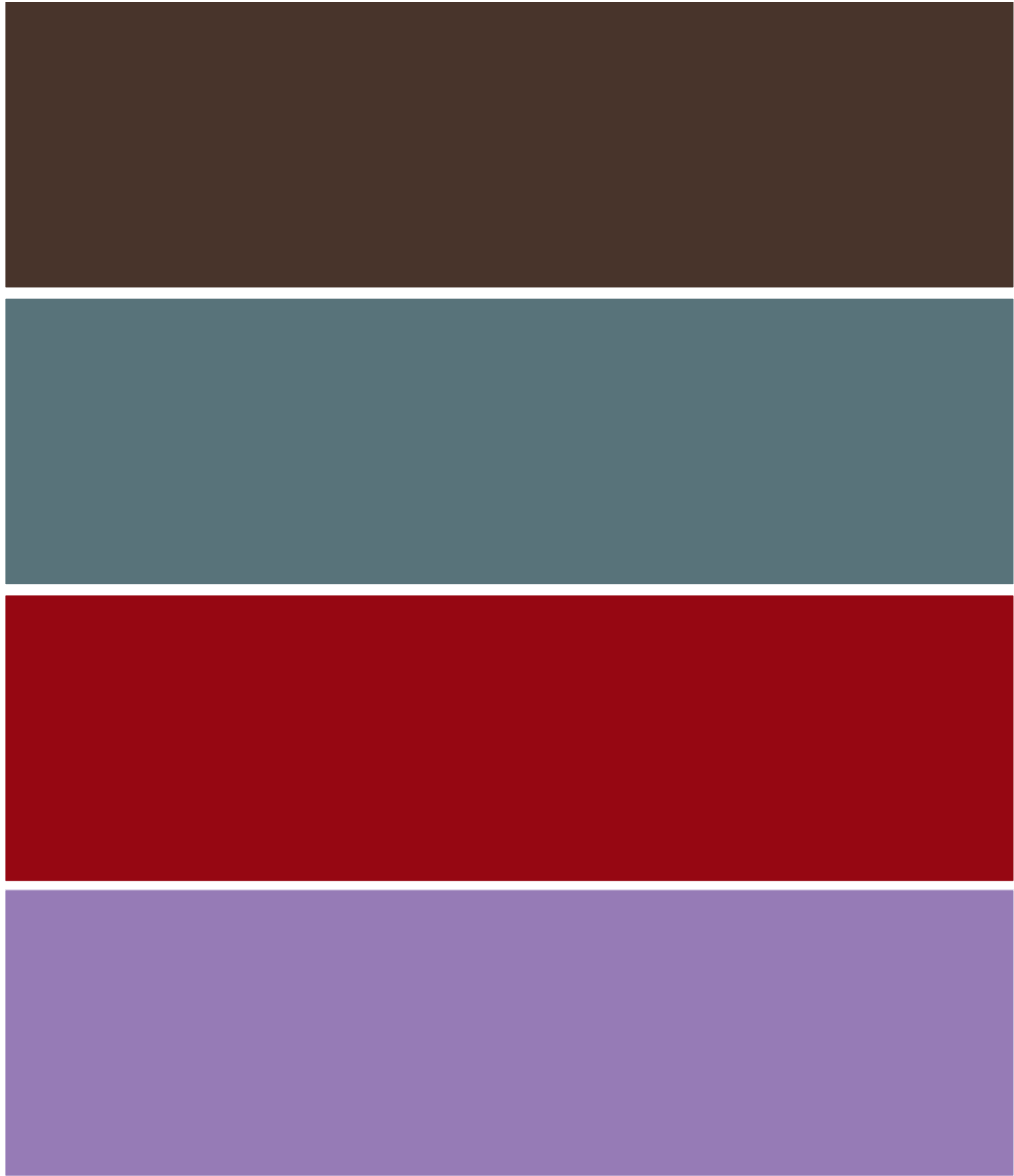
If you use an **iOS phone or tablet**: open the Camera app from the Home Screen, Control Center, or Lock Screen. Select the rear facing camera. Hold your device so that the QR code appears in the viewfinder in the Camera app. Your device recognizes the QR code and shows a notification. Tap the notification to open the link associated with the QR code and you will be re-directed to the digital profile of the artisan.

If you prefer to browse the profiles directly from your PC, you can just use the links that you will find in this document as an Appendix.

Visual map of crafts professionals participating to crafts 50



**European
heritage:
the typical
craft of
partner
countries**





ALAIN LOVENBERG

BELGIUM (*Mad'in Europe*)

Crafts have been essential for Belgium's economic development. The art of lace-making and the art of diamond-cutting are highlights for Flanders, its Dutch-speaking region, whereas Wallonia, the French speaking part, has a long tradition of glassmaking. Belgium is also a reference for Art Nouveau and Art Deco architecture and interior design; where highly skilled craftspeople contributed to all parts of the buildings, inside and outside. They made outstanding stained-glass windows, furniture, stairs, sgraffitos, engraved metal pieces, carved wood ones, blown glass and much more, thus contributing to build the rich Belgian heritage. Such an example is the outstanding [Major Town Houses of the Architect Victor Horta \(Brussels\)](#) inscribed on the [UNESCO's World Heritage List](#). Belgium's textile heritage is also very typical when referring to Belgian know-how in the field of crafts. A "craft" label has been inserted in the Belgian legislation very recently (2016). According to it, a craftsman is "...a person active in the production, transformation, repair, restoration of objects or the provision of services, whose activities are essentially manual, developing a certain know-how based on quality, tradition, creation or innovation".

ALAIN LOVENBERG



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF CRAFT IN BELGIUM IN
THE POCKET GUIDEBOOK.

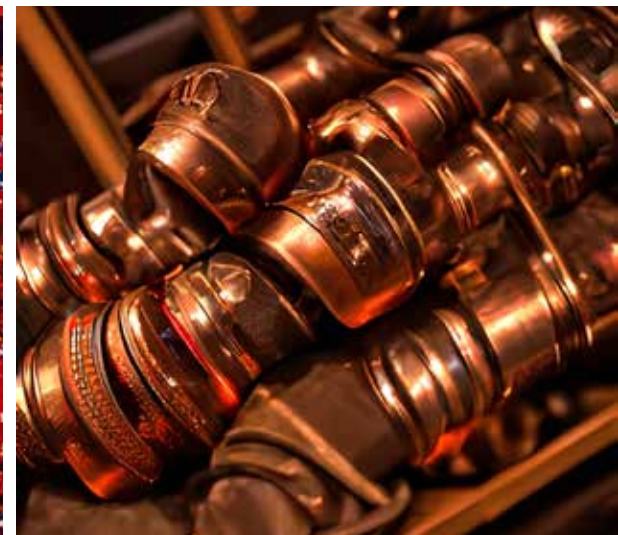


BULGARIA (*Balkanplan*)

According to the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria, in 2020 there were 398 registered craft professionals. The Law on Crafts in Bulgaria contains a list of 57 types of crafts, divided into 2 main groups: 1/ Traditional (folk) arts and crafts and 2/ Other (such as bell casting, glass blowing, glass painting and engraving). Among which the territorially most specific are knife making and copper smithing tight to the town of Kostenets, southwestern Bulgaria, and wood crafting and pottery linked to the town of Triavna, central Bulgaria. Bulgaria also has a strong background in silver smithery, leather and lace production throughout different regions of the country. These crafts are still strongly practised today. Handmade carpets were once common and typical for Bulgaria, [The tradition of carpet-making in Chiprovtsi](#) is inscribed on the [UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity](#). Still despite their once fame and recognition due to the lack of transmission the craft of carpet weaving traditionally called *kilim* is unfortunately steadily declining. Crafts in Bulgaria are mostly typical for rural areas and hence their influence is important for the local economic development. Therefore, the crafts sector in Bulgaria is mainly supported through EU co-financed operational programs that aim to promote entrepreneurship in medium and small enterprises and to support rural development.



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE BULGARIAN CRAFTS ACT AND STATE OF CRAFT IN BULGARIA ON THE POCKET GUIDEBOOK.



CYPRUS (*Magnetar*)

Cyprus has a rich and diverse history of crafting, with a legacy that dates back thousands of years to the island's ancient civilizations. Many of these traditions have been passed down from generation to generation and are still practiced today. One of the crafts that has been passed down for centuries is the creation of intricate, hand-painted ceramics, which have been made on the island for centuries. There is also a long history of weaving and embroidery. The famous '[Lefkaritika](#)' embroidered linens are handmade lace pieces produced in the mountainous Larnaka (Larnaca) village of Lefkara since Venetian times and also recognized by [UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity](#). The practise of weaving was highly developed during Byzantine times and is still practiced in the Pafos (Paphos) village of Fyti, which makes colourful geometric textured designs on undyed cotton cloth - particularly rectangular napkins, tablecloths and bed covers. Another important Cypriot craft is basket-weaving that dates back to ancient times. Their main purpose was to carry agricultural produce and to "dress" bottles to avoid liquids leaking. Cyprus is famous for the crafts of decorated gourds, turning grounds into decorative objects; As well as for the art of filigree, known as 'trifouri'. Delicate craft of twisting fine silver wire into beautiful hand-made jewelry, decorative cutlery or tableware. Today, these crafts continue to thrive and play an important role in the island's economy and cultural heritage. Many of the craft products can be found in local shops and markets, and some can also be seen on display in museums and galleries. The continued popularity of these crafts is a testament to the skill, artistry, and dedication of the people who continue to produce them. The main body responsible for the continuity of crafts is the Cyprus Centre of Craft, managed under the auspices of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism.



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE STATE OF THE CRAFT SECTOR IN
CYPRUS ON THE POCKET GUIDEBOOK.



GEORGIA (GACC)

Located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Georgia has been distinguished by various craft traditions for centuries. These craft traditions, in terms of crafts techniques, colour combinations and ornamental patterns in ceramic, woodcarving, stonework, metalwork, leatherwork, basket weaving and textiles, which include knitting, carpet weaving, felting, block printing, strongly vary from province to province. The strong diversity across Georgian regions ensures the ethnographic mosaic of the country and its special attractiveness. In spite of the diversity of crafts expressions, traditionally almost every house across Georgia was richly decorated with wood carvings, cloth, or ceramic objects. Due to their strong presence skilled craft makers, artisans and designers in Georgia have always been appreciated and respected. As a matter of tradition, crafts were seen as family activities, passed on from generation to generation, rather than business enterprises. However, this perception is slowly changing... There are the first companies established by skilled and well-recognized craft makers, such as traditional tablecloth producer [LURJI SUPRA](#), [ORKOLI Studio](#), [PESVEBI Studio](#). Georgia is one of the many countries that have problems with the recognition of the craft sector, since it is not fully provided for in the country's legal structure, but it is valued as part of [intangible cultural heritage](#) and cultural industry.



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE STATE OF THE CRAFT SECTOR IN GEORGIA ON THE POCKET GUIDEBOOK.



ITALY (*Anziani e non solo società cooperativa sociale*)

Italy has a great tradition and a huge heritage of craftsmen in a wide variety of sectors and processes. However, there are four regions that have a distinct territorial craft character and are considered to be the most important to artistic craftsmanship at a national level. These are Marche with footwear production, artistic ceramics in Umbria, leather goods in Tuscany and artistic glass in Veneto. For instance, [The art of glass beads](#) is inscribed on the [UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity](#). Another craft recognized by UNESCO is [Traditional violin craftsmanship in Cremona](#). According to Confartigianato, in 2019 there were 288,302 artistic craft enterprises with a total of 801,001 employees (Confartigianato (2019), "Laboratorio Artigianato artistico: imprese artigiane e addetti"). The enterprises are distributed rather evenly over the various areas - metals, foodstuffs, clothing, wood, etc. In addition to the tradition, crafts nowadays in Italy slowly started relying also on the use of new technologies. The well represented phenomenon is the use of 3D printers. **FabLab network**, i.e., open digital fabrication laboratories where anyone can make their own prototype, even at low cost, thanks to the use of 3D printers.



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE STATE OF THE CRAFT SECTOR IN ITALY ON THE POCKET GUIDEBOOK.



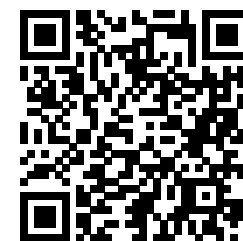


PORTUGAL (*Aproximar*)

Crafts are a key component of the Portuguese cultural identity. Various types of crafts are unique to each region in the country, which gives rise to a wide variety of practices and know-how. Among the most represented crafts are woolen craftsmanship; wood craftsmanship; pottery crafts (clay); and straw craftsmanship (Crafts Innovation, 2014; Barrica, 2020). For example, the village Bisalhães is known as ‘the land of pot and pan producers’, in other words, the place where [Black Pottery Manufacturing Process](#) takes place. The craft was recognized by UNESCO in 2016, but in 2021 it was added to the [List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding](#) as the craft is to be lost due to the lack of knowledge transmission. Another clay craft recognized by UNESCO is [Craftsmanship of Estremoz clay figures](#). Completely different is the [Manufacture of cowbells](#) - “handmade from iron, which is cold-hammered and folded on an anvil until it is cup-shaped”, also inscribed on the List for Urgent Safeguarding since 2020. In general, The National Handicrafts Register, accessible through the **CEARTE** (Centro de Formação Profissional para o Artesanato e Património) website, shows 3173 craftsmen in Portugal. Of these, the most frequent practice in the country is textile crafts (1133 certified). This is followed by ceramic crafts (484) and wood crafts (349). Regarding textile crafts, there are different types of products and productions according to country regions that end up being very characteristic of that territory: Tapetes de Arraiolos; Bordados de Castelo Branco; Bordados de Tibaldinho ([CMCB](#), 2023; [7Maravilhas](#), n.d., [CITA](#), 2017).



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE STATE OF THE CRAFT SECTOR IN PORTUGAL
ON THE POCKET GUIDEBOOK.

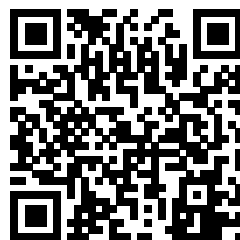


ROMANIA (Assoc)

Romania is a very rich country in terms of craft activities - production of religious objects, such as icons on glass or wood, fabrics, such as carpets, belts, rugs and towels, variety of folk costumes, wooden objects and braids, wooden churches, variety of ceramic objects, crafts of decorated eggs... Still all these crafts activities are spread across different regions of Romania. Each region is usually specialized and linked to the production or practice of one or sometimes more specific crafts. The Maramures region is specialized in wooden decorations, carvings and wooden churches. The beauty of the wooden churches and “*high level of artistic maturity and craft skills*” is recognized throughout the outstanding example of eight wooden churches - [Wooden Churches of Maramureș](#) that are since 1999 part of the [UNESCO's World Heritage List](#). In the meantime, Moldova and Transylvania are well-known for their ceramics and clay. For instance, the [Horezu ceramics](#) are so unique that the craft is inscribed on the [UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity](#). Furthermore, Moldova also enjoys fame for its traditional [wall-carpet craftsmanship](#), which has also been recognized by UNESCO since 2016. Additionally, each region of Romania can be territorially defined by the region-specific use of colours, materials and decoration patterns expressed across a variety of objects among which are also folk costumes. Again, [The art of the traditional blouse with embroidery on the shoulder \(altiță\)](#) is recognized by UNESCO.



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE STATE OF THE CRAFT SECTOR IN ROMANIA
ON THE POCKET GUIDEBOOK.



Source: www.artandcraft.ro



Source: expressdebanat.ro

- WOOD
- JEWELLERY
- TEXTILE
- MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
- DECORATIVE CRAFTS
- METAL
- CERAMIC
- OTHER



THE FLOOR TO CRAFTS PROFESSIONALS

A close-up photograph of wood shavings and a wooden bowl. The shavings are light brown and have a rough, textured surface. The wooden bowl is made of a similar material and has a smooth, polished interior. The lighting is warm and focused on the wood, creating a soft glow. The background is dark and out of focus.

Wood



António Pereira

Woodturner  Portugal

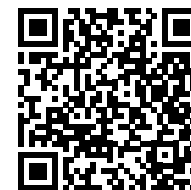


When I was little, my father used to go on work trips and bring me wooden cars and other wooden toys. Ever since then, I wondered if I would be able to do it too. A few years ago, I saw one of those toys, and instead of wondering, I went to the garage, got some saws and nails and made a wooden car. When I realised I could build it, I was so happy. That was my first car and my beginning with wooden crafts. Afterwards, I started doing wagons pulled by cows, other vehicles, and fire trucks, which I've been selling a lot. I made a Car that I offered to the City Hall of Ílhavo, with which I competed in the "Festival do Bacalhau". I created a work representing the "Seca do bacalhau" and offered it to the parish council.

To make wood handicrafts, I usually use saws to cut the wood; I have a chisel to disguise it when the wood is too high and a planer when the piece is too big and I have to rough it up.

“

HANDICRAFTS CONNECT US WITH
OUR ANCESTRY





Christine Cession

Wood/Polychrome Sculpture restorer

 Belgium

AS A WOOD/POLYCHROME SCULPTURE RESTORER, MY FAVORITE WEAPONS ARE: ANOXIA (DEPRIVATION OF OXYGEN TO DESTROY XYLOPHAGOUS INSECTS), INJECTION OF CONSOLIDANT TO SOLIDIFY WORM-EATEN WOOD, BINOCULAR MICROSCOPE, MINI SCALPELS FOR A LOT OF USE AND A THOUSAND BRUSHES FOR RETOUCHING AT THE END OF THE TREATMENT

I work in the restoration-conservation of polychrome wooden sculptures after five years of study at ENSAV-La Cambre (Brussels) and one year of specialization at IRPA (Royal Institute of Artistic Heritage, Brussels). My workplace changes according to my projects (the sculpture that I am restoring). So, sometimes I work in my studio when the sculptures are smaller, some other times in churches, museums etc... Depending on the size and nature of restauration sometimes I use a microscope, and sometimes I work on very high scaffoldings.

Prior to hands-on work, I conduct deep research and perform laboratory analyses. It is done to understand the history of an object in order to guide restorations. The typical analysis includes analyzes of pigments and old binders, X-rays, tracing back the dating of the wood, detecting the layers of polychrome as well as working closely with art historians.





Source: DirectMM

Ioachim-Mihai Rus

Wood carver  Romania

“ TURN YOUR GAZE TO
NATURE AND GIVE
VENT TO YOUR IMAGINATION



I have over 10 years of experience in this field. Among my works I could list Maramures gates, terraces, pavilions in traditional Maramures style, pillars carved with traditional Maramures motifs, ornamental sculptures for the garden and many other wooden works. In addition to these, I also make smaller works, including ornamental bottles with various carved wooden pieces inside them, platters for serving dishes, and various carved souvenir objects. My story began in childhood and the love for wood comes from my father and grandfather, who were carpenters and joiners by trade. As a child, I used to sit next to them and help them in the woodworking process. After that I tried to copy what my father was doing, and in this way I gained skill and love for this material. When I grew up, I tried to create different pieces according to my imagination.

The creative process begins with a log or a piece of wood, which is cut at the customer's request, cut at different angles, the model is created on it and sculpted, and finally a protective layer is applied to the surface the wood, which can be made of linseed oil or water-based varnishes





Oliver Cabay

Restorer of Carpentry 📍 Belgium

“

OUR ECOLOGICAL APPROACH IS REFLECTED IN THE PRINCIPLE OF CIRCULARITY: RESTORING THE OLD RATHER THAN REPLACING WHEN IT IS NOT ESSENTIAL. WE ALWAYS FAVOR CERTIFIED NATIVE WOODS OVER EXOTIC WOODS

I am a member of Icomos Wallonie Brussels, Union des Artisans du Patrimoine, and Ecobuild Brussels. To know what I know today, however, has been a long journey... I started through the apprenticeship program organized by Crepac and I acquired my training in the carpentry company.

Today I am part of The Cabay carpentry, founded in 1995, specialized in the restoration or “identical copying” of old carpentry such as frames, doors, etc. At The Cabay, our extensive experience allows us to restore old frames in order to perpetuate them with respect for heritage and to improve thermal and acoustic sealing, for example by incorporating a flexible anchor joint in the frame.

Clamp is used for tightening. Most commonly it is used when gluing, for example, to join two pieces together. In the case of the photo, the clamp is used to glue frame to frame.





Yves Piérart

Wood carver/designer  Belgium

I left the computer world to devote myself to the world of wood. I followed the cabinetmaking and woodcarving training at the Diderot Institute in Brussels. Autodidactically, I also became passionate about woodturning, especially segmented turning.

Main tools for woodturning are wood lathe and hand-held tools.

With the aim of an eco-responsible approach, The technique used in most of my creations is the solid and/or openwork segmental turning technique with proportional or fixed spacing. This means that the object is divided into rings and these rings are divided into segments. For solid segmented turning, there is no spacing between the segments while for openwork, this spacing can be fixed or proportional depending on the diameter of each ring.

“

AS I APPROACHED MY FORTIES,
I DISCOVERED A PASSION FOR WOOD



Jewellery





Floare Roman

Jewelry and lacemaker 📍 Romania



My works imply weaving, sewing, crocheting and tatting . It takes a lot of time to learn the art of weaving and sewing, but dedication and patience is the key.

I learned to work with the 'Frovolite' technique at the Normal Teachers' School, from a teacher in Bessarabia. Over time, I learned to make traditional Maramuresean necklaces alone. A technique present in Romania since the 19th century, string date is the most common way to make lace, used to decorate the interior of the house: tablecloths, decorative lace, in different shapes and colors. I also work 'cipcă' for decorating the interior of houses, but also for delicate collars for clothes. The 'frovolite' technique has been known in Europe since the 18th century, being taught in schools in Romania, especially in the interwar period. The results of this technique are laces of extraordinary fineness. I make decorative laces, but also imaginative paintings.

NEVER FORGET WHERE YOU CAME FROM,
RETURN TO YOUR ROOTS AND RESPECT
YOUR TRADITION AND CULTURE





Georgia Kambouridou

Jewellery Maker  Cyprus



I am a Jewellery Maker and Instructor with 14 years of experience. I specialized in creating unique, handmade jewelry pieces that are both beautiful and functional. I work with a variety of materials, including natural and sustainable materials, as well as wire, bead, liquid glass, and glass gems. The tools I use for my craft include my hands, pliers, and cutters.

One of the most important tools in my jewelry making process is my hands. They allow me to manipulate the materials and form them into the desired shapes and designs. I also work closely with other craftspeople, such as cloth and accessory makers, to create jewelry that can enhance their creations.

Overall, I am passionate about my craft and am dedicated to creating high-quality, beautiful jewelry pieces that bring joy to those who wear them.

CRAFTSMANSHIP IS NOT A TALENT, BUT A SKILL
THAT CAN BE LEARNED AND PERFECTED THROUGH
PASSION AND PERSISTENCE.





I create jewelry from polymer clay, natural leather and painted silk. The main material I use is polymer clay, which is the modern alternative to clay, which has been used to create ornaments and household items since the Neolithic.. It is a graceful and challenging material, resistant and long-lasting. I also work with natural leather, which I buy from a special store, usually using waste from the shoe industry. The natural silk with which I create some of my jewelry is bought from fabric stores.

I became interested in and experimented with polymer clay at the age of 45. This happened in the period after a major operation which required a long period of treatment at home and which completely took me out of my comfort zone. I needed a hobby, urgently, and I started. I can describe the work process in one word: fun!

Pavlina Borisova Dudina

Jeweler  Bulgaria

I BELIEVE THAT NOWADAYS IT IS
POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE YOURSELF
IF YOU PUT YOUR HEART INTO
YOUR WORK AND CONSTANTLY
LOOK FOR NEW SOURCES OF
INFORMATION!





In my childhood, it was not good for a girl not to do anything. All the young girls must know how to weave, sew and work their wedding ornaments. So my grandmother put the loom, needle and thread in my hand and I started making doilies and tablecloths. Then she taught me to weave at a “war”. Thus, I began to learn this craft, which I practiced out of passion and then as a folk craftsman.

The materials I need are different sizes of sewing needles, textile threads, beads and a bead loom. Maramureş County is the only area in the country where ornaments were woven. Women wore them around their necks on holidays or on the most important day of their lives, their wedding. I set up my workshop for this purpose, to remind me of the houses of our grandparents, who in the evening worked on objects that decorated both their home and their soul.



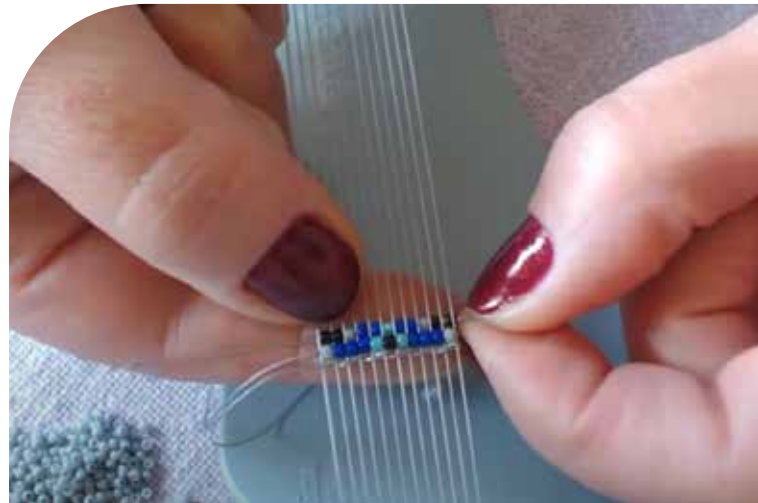
LIVE IN CONTACT WITH THE NATURE AND GET
ASTONISHED BY ITS COLOURS AND EXPRESSIONS



Rodica Sabadis

Embroider and jewelry designer

 Romania





Silvia Vasileva

Jeweler  Bulgaria



I POPULARIZE BULGARIAN NEEDLEWORK IN ITS
VARIOUS APPLICATIONS.

I LOVE FLOWERS AND AM INTERESTED
IN DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES FOR USING THEM AS
DECORATION

I am a textile engineer by profession. I graduated from the Technical University of Sofia. worked for many years in a textile enterprise as a model designer, technologist and marketing organizer. I like doing art. I am a lover of folklore. Ever since I was a student, my hobby has been making individual models of clothes, jewelry, accessories, and decoration. I popularize Bulgarian needlework in its various applications. I love flowers and am interested in different techniques for using them as decoration.

In recent years, I have built and promoted my own brand in resin and flower jewelry making, SilvieArt, and a brand with Bulgarian embroidery, SilvieBiju. I participate in various exhibitions in Bulgaria. Due to the specifics of the technology for working with resin, as well as its toxicity, it is not possible to do trainings. I have a Master's certificate for jewelry making.





Textile



Alzira Manuela Carrapichano

Embroidery and Lace maker  Portugal

I used to see my aunt doing a lot of lace, and that is what got me started. I started to learn with my aunt when I was 13 and have continued until today. Through the years, I have been perfecting my embroidery technique, learning it from the master. During a bad phase of my life, when I was sad, I was invited to go to the library and join an older adult group. The group started to grow, adding other participants up till today. It's been ten years.

The materials I use are scissors, a thimble, an embroidery needle, and lace needles according to the lines (they are various numbers that depend on the lines). The threads for quilting are thick; for other things, they are very fine threads.

“WHILE DOING EMBROIDERY, I FEEL RELAXED, AND I HAVE BEEN DOING THIS FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS, IT MAKES ME FEEL GOOD AND INSPIRED





Beatriz Onofre

Embroidery and Lace maker  Portugal



Ever since I can remember, I have always liked sewing, and my life has invariably surrounded it. However, there came a time when for personal reasons, I had to stop.

Anyhow, I have always had a great affection for handicrafts, hems, and embroidery, so I kept doing what I liked and it brought me joy. In the last few years, due to life circumstances, I started to dedicate myself more and more to these arts.

When it comes to open hems, depending on the height you want, you have to cut the threads, then put in new ones and make designs with them. I enjoy the more difficult and challenging things.

MAKING LACE AND EMBROIDERY IS GOOD FOR MY
MIND, IT CHEERS ME UP! I HAVE LOVED DOING IT
SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL.





Cristina Talanca

Creative sewing 📍 Italy



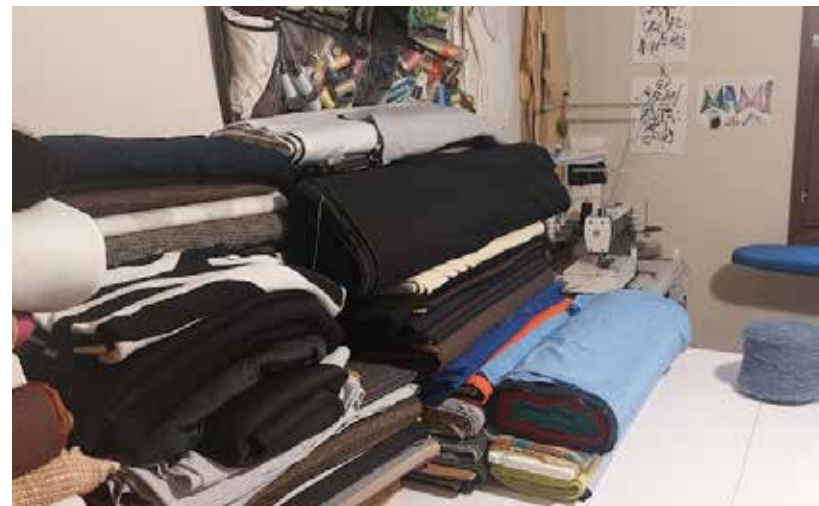
It all starts from my encounter with the passion for sewing clothes, with warm, strong, eye-catching colors.

When I decided I wanted to create for others too, my Lecris brand was born, based on the search for taste, beauty, fabric, models and the pleasure of sewing them with passion and patience. I like starting from an idea that is a dress or accessory and developing it in all its phases, from the design of the pattern in several sizes, to the choice of fabrics, cutting, finally sewing and packaging.

I like to say that my garments are a compromise between tradition and innovation, a garment that is fashionable but durable and that you can hardly find in stores. My products are unique and elegant clothing creations that reflect my personality and my creativity.

“

THE FUEL FOR THIS JOB ARE PASSION,
WILL AND PERSEVERANCE





Eka Khuntsaria

Textile designer  Georgia

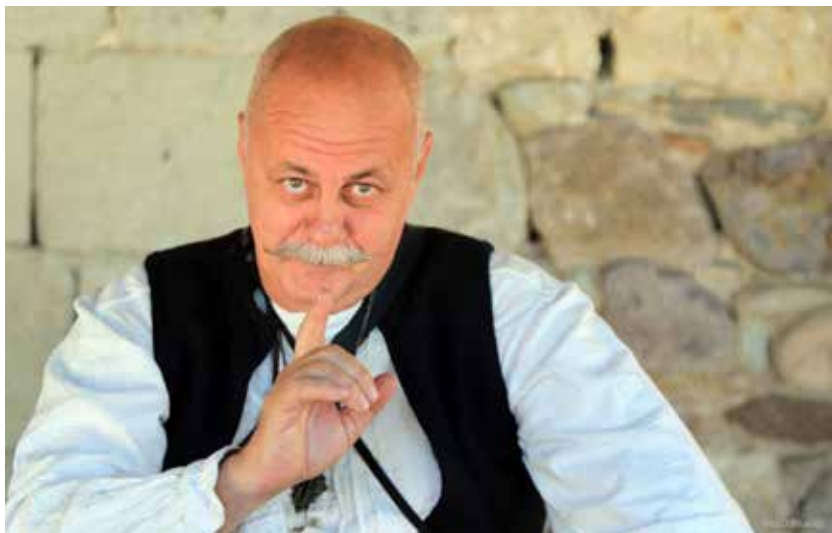
“ NEVER BE LAZY TO STUDY, TO LEARN, TO DEEPEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AS WELL AS BE WELL EDUCATED IN GENERAL. IT WILL ONLY HELP YOU IN YOUR CREATIVE WORK AND THIS PROCESS IS EVERLASTING. BE PATIENT AND DON'T GIVE UP ON THE FIRST FAILURE. WORK HARD AND IN THE END, YOU WILL SUCCEED

My name is Eka Khuntsaria. I am a textile designer. I use both the hot and cold techniques of Batik. However, based on a 26-year-long experience, I developed my own technique, which I call 'painting on silk' as I apply textile and acrylic paints over the silk, setting the colors by wax and paraffin without using wax-resist lines.

My attitude to silk is similar to what the canvas means to the painter – a space without borders.” I believe that new ideas are born only during the working process. That is why I decided to start drawing directly on the silk without any preliminary sketches.

Some of my works look like watercolor paintings. So, I would say that my works are a mix of traditional colors and patterns with innovative techniques and painting styles. Besides the wall hangings, I make screens, lampshades, scarves, pillowcases, etc.





Ivan Tonev

Abadzhiistvo  Bulgaria

“ A NATION THAT DOES NOT KNOW
THE PAST AND TRADITIONS HAS
NO FUTURE. TRADITIONS ARE
ALIVE WHEN THEY ARE PRESERVED,
TRANSMITTED AND DEVELOPED.



I discovered the craft ten years ago - I was 43 years old at the time. My aim was to learn a craft - as it was practiced in the past before the sewing machine appeared. I wanted to acquire knowledge and skills with which to approach authenticity as closely as possible. I wanted to learn a craft the way apprentices were taught by their masters. For me it took a total of 6 years to master this craft - three years of training as an apprentice and three years as a 'kalfa' to then become a master. To make a national costume, you need fabric, woolen and cotton thread. The fabrics that I use when sewing costumes are old, hand-woven fabrics on a loom. I buy these fabrics from the markets and from people who have them from their grandmothers, who have woven them back in the days. The woolen cord is used to combine the parts of the garment and is also used for decoration. I usually buy it from the Ethnographic Museum of Etar. The production of one costume takes between 30 and 45 days. The tools I use are also the same as those used by the Bulgarian masters back in time – large needles, cotton thread, large scissors, a measuring instrument – 'arshin' and a hook, which is the third hand of the craftsman. I even make the metal buttons for the costumes myself.



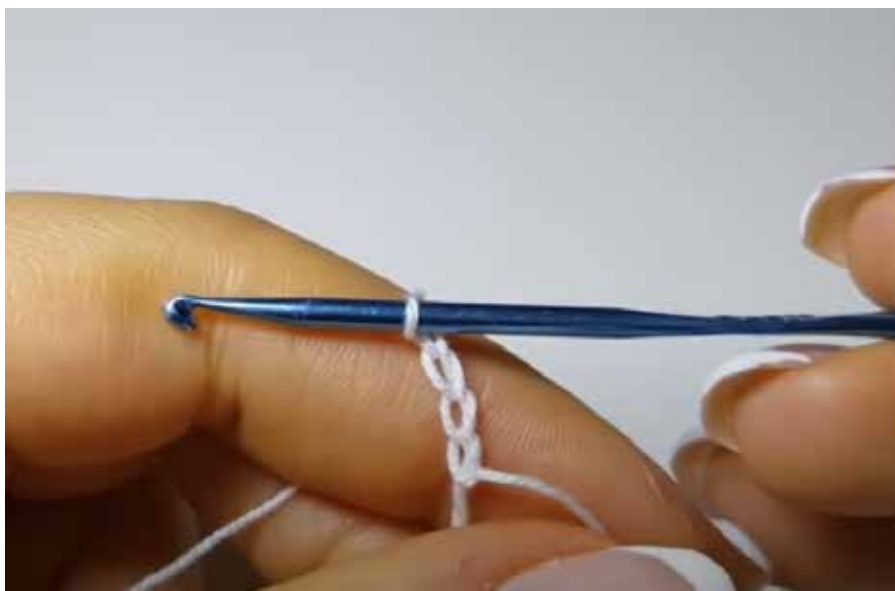


Maria Maries

Embroider  Romania

I learnt this job from my mother, at the age of 7-8, during the “sitters” that were organized in the winter evenings... In village life, during the winter, women gathered together and made handcrafts and traditional suits.

The designs I work on are inspired by old works – wipes, cushion covers, tablecloths, traditional costumes of the area representing floral motifs, leaves and vines. Over the years I have made home decor items, lace, tablecloths and pillowcases for the family. In recent years, I have been concerned with passing on these activities to the younger generations. The place where I carry out my activity is at home and at fairs. Crochet needle and thread are my friends who accompany me every step of the way. My lace work today is applied to traditional suits, hems, sleeves and collars. For the younger generation I crochet earrings and bracelets. I encourage other people to practice these hand crafts as they are an incredible way to relax.



“

RELAX AND DO WHAT MAKES
YOU HAPPY IN YOUR LIFE





Nino Kvavilashvili

Artist and designer  Georgia

My name is Nino Kvavilashvili. I am an artist and designer. Since I graduated from Tbilisi Fine Art Academy in 1991, I work in various textile techniques, such as batik, shibori, quilt, and patchwork. I make different accessories like pillows, bags, lamps tablecloths, blankets, and whatever else can be done in textile.

And to be honest with you I love textiles very much, they give you endless possibilities.



DO EVERYTHING WITH LOVE.
STUDY WELL AND WORK WITH LOVE.





Olga Demetriou

Lace maker  Cyprus

I am a Lefkaritiko Lace maker with over 30 years of experience. I come from Lefkara, Cyprus, the home of Lefkaritiko lace, where this craft is part of the local cultural heritage and recognized by UNESCO. I learned the craft from my mother and grandmother and started practicing at the age of 6. The main materials I use are linen and “demise” linen thread. The main tools I use are the needle, thimble, scissors, and embroidery pillow, some of which have been passed down from generation to generation.

In my profession, tradition is key and innovation cannot be integrated as the technique and colors are set. My main target market is tourists and my creations can be found all around Cyprus. It is important for me to not only create high-quality craft products but also to focus on dissemination and marketing to reach a wider audience.



THE PASSION FOR CREATING AND THE QUALITY OF
THE CRAFT PRODUCTS ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT AS
GOOD DISSEMINATION AND MARKETING





Rossella Vallini

Out of the blue dressmaker 📍 Italy



Inspired by the 50s, I create accessories for women and men such as headbands, bands, bow ties, skirts. The passion was born 4 years ago from old photos of my mum and from that elegant and unique style. Our work begins with the search for modern and current fabrics with a vintage reference to that period, the important thing being that they are in cotton, linen, wool and mohair.

All the subsequent phases are carried out in front of two cups of tea, a good film and lots of chats but also long silent breaks where the noise is given only by the sewing machine and the overlocker.

The garments and accessories created are then proposed for our pages and for the markets.

I LOVE "BUBBLY" MINDS

I LOVE IDEAS



I LOVE TO MAKE MY DREAMS COME TRUE





Vicky Christodoulou

Wool knitter  Cyprus



I am a wool knitter with over 10 years of experience. I started learning this craft from my mother at the age of 7 and now I have my own shop where I sell my creations and knitting equipment. I use wool and threads to create my pieces, which I import from abroad. The main tools I use are knitting needles, which vary in size depending on the thickness of the wool. Innovation in my work is reflected in the design and combination of materials. I target anyone who wants to buy wool products or learn how to knit and I hope to expand my products to businesses in the future.

I believe that it is important for people to take a break from technology and learn something traditional and new, like knitting. Knitting requires passion and love for the craft, and with that, the ability to create beautiful and useful pieces can be a source of fulfillment and relaxation.

CREATING WITH YOUR OWN HANDS CAN BE VERY
FULFILLING AND RELAXING AT THE SAME TIME.





Vitória Sousa

Embroiderer  Portugal



I worked for 46 years as a government employee. After retiring, I wanted to make curtains for my house, so I decided to learn how to do it. I joined some classes and started to make them myself at home, but with the pandemic, the lady stopped teaching. Meanwhile, I came here (Laboratory of ageing, Ílhavo). Here I have been able to do many things and learn new techniques. We made the “Dóri” and I have done a lot of embroidery on jumpers, bags, and cushions.

I use balls of thread of various materials, needles of different sizes depending on the line and the type of embroidery we intend to do, and bastidores (Embroidery hoops). When doing embroidery on shirts, these need to be buttoned all around so it isn't unravelled, which takes a long time.

HANDICRAFTS ARE A COMFORT TO THE SOUL,
THEY SERVE AS RELAXATION





Rosário Castro

Embroiderer  Portugal



When I left 4th grade and went directly to work, I lost the chance to learn embroidery and to dedicate full time to it. Since I have retired, I have taken this chance to come to the “Laboratory of ageing” and learn more. The techniques I use in my works are mainly designs in nouvel art that are chosen and embroidered until they fill out.

The designs are applied to many different objects, such as cushions, bags, t-shirts etc. To make these items, I use a needle and thread. I outline everything and then fill it in. Here, in the “Laboratory of ageing”, we have the opportunity to ask and see how to do it and keep learning.



LEARNING TO DO EMBROIDERY IS GOOD FOR
KEEPING OUR HEADS BUSY, RELAXING AND IS
GOOD FOR OUR MENTAL HEALTH





Musical instruments



Jacques Magnette

Harpsichord maker & restorer

 Belgium



I started my profession of harpsichord and virginals maker when I was 26. My job is to build but also to renovate, maintain, and tune harpsichords, spinets and virginals, keyboard and other plucked string instruments. The main materials I use are metal, wood, leather, bone, mother of pearl, natural glues, parchment etc... Depending on the destination of the wood in the instrument, we use different wood essences. Some for their acoustic qualities, others for their mechanical resistance or for their decorative properties. As a harpsichord maker, it is crucial to know how to handle the traditional tools of the trade such as planes, varlopes, guilotines, chisels, gouges, scrapers, coticules, agate stones.

Thickness Gauge is used for measuring the thickness of the middle of the soundboard

By working in the music field, I have the chance to have among my clients: musicians (I happened to marry one!), music academies, museums, historic houses owners who need expertise, maintenance skills or who want to order new instruments.

I WAS MOTIVATED TO LEARN THE FABULOUS CRAFT
OF HARPSICHORD MAKING BY MEETING MY
HARPSICHORDIST WIFE

“





Stepan Demirdjian

Luthier  Bulgaria

I am a luthier who makes violins and violas. Another major part of my work is to repair and restore all instruments of the violin family and their bows. I have graduated from the luthier's department of the woodworking school in my hometown Plovdiv. The learning there lasted four years. I was twenty two when I started to make violins as a luthier in a violin making factory. Few years later I established my own atelier. The wooden materials I use are the classically established combination of European spruce for the tops and Balkan maple for the rest parts as well as ebony, rosewood and boxwood for the fingerboards and trimmings. I mainly work with natural air dried (about twenty years) wood from Bulgaria because of its excellent acoustic quality.

THE VIOLIN MAKING TECHNOLOGY IS CONSERVATIVE
FOLLOWING A FEW CENTURY LASTING WORK METHODS.

“

MY MISSION IS TO KEEP FOLLOWING THEM



Decorative crafts





As a tail painter, I draw and paint on ceramic surfaces in 3° fire. Depending on the purpose, I use specific brushes, such as Kolinsky sable-hair brush, medium watery or oily. I boil the pigments in a small muffle to fix them in a long-lasting way. More recently, I started to use a small silkscreen method to optimise computer-edited drawings, enabling a marketing approach. Currently, I do not work with anyone in particular, and have preferred to put my services at the service of the community.

Acácio Manuel Carlos Moreira

Ceramic designer  Portugal



LEARN TILL YOU DIE,
KNOWLEDGE IS NEVER TOO MUCH





I am a mosaic artist with 13 years of experience. I create mosaic art pieces and tessellation works using colored mosaic tiles that I cut into different shapes. My main tools include a tile cutter, everyday cutlery, and glue. I work with both traditional and innovative designs, with a focus on preserving the cultural heritage of mosaic art.

My passion for mosaic art started after I retired from my full-time job and attended two lessons on mosaic techniques. I started my own production and have been creating replicas and copies of images ever since. I use an eco-friendly tile material that is becoming more difficult to access due to the specialty of my work.

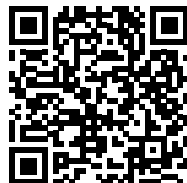
My objective is to highlight the business opportunities in mosaic art, but I have faced challenges in penetrating markets where the public does not appreciate the cost and effort involved in creating a project. Nevertheless, I believe that young artists with patience and talent can create beautiful works of art and preserve the thousands of years old craft.

Andreas Theodoridis

Mosaic artist  Cyprus



ART IS NOT WHAT YOU SEE,
BUT WHAT YOU MAKE OTHERS SEE





To become a contemporary master of stucco-marble and Scagliola (inlay technique of stucco-marble) I worked and trained with the most renowned masters in the field across Europe, France, Italy, Spain and Belgium. Due to years of practice, today, I am able to innovate and adapt the technique to the aesthetic concepts of the XXI century and apply it to design, architecture, sculpture and painting for the creation of original works.

The stucco-marble is a material used since the XVI century to imitate the look of stone and marble. The art of stucco-marble is therefore one of the most brilliant and probably the most sophisticated manifestations of marble imitations. This art was initiated at the beginning of the XVI century and had its culmination in the Baroque period. The first schools of this technique, historically and traditionally called “Scagliola”, developed in Austria, Bavaria and Italy.



Angel Barrero

Master of stucco-marble and scagliola

📍 Belgium

“ MY INTERPRETATION IS CONTEMPORARY AND LUXURIOUS.
THE ADVANTAGE OF THIS TECHNIQUE IS TO OBTAIN SEAMLESS
SURFACES, AND ENDLESS COLOR POSSIBILITIES AND VARIATIONS

Photos: Angel Barrero at Pearls of Craftsmanship





Chrystalla Pitsillidou

Traditional craft woman in folk crafts

 Cyprus

“CRAFTSMANSHIP IS NOT JUST ABOUT MAKING A PRODUCT, BUT ABOUT PRESERVING TRADITION AND CREATING A THERAPY ENVIRONMENT FOR THE CRAFTSMAN. I FULLY RECOMMEND TAKING UP GOURD DECORATION AND ENGRAVING AS A CRAFT, PROFESSION OR EVEN HOBBY.”

I work with gourds, which I decorate and make into household items such as wine carafes, candlesticks, and containers for salt or olives.

I learned this craft from my grandfather at the age of 11 and there is no formal training for it. It requires finding an experienced craftsman or woman to learn the techniques from.

I use gourds, which I get from farmers in Cyprus, and traditional tools such as a knife and a hot poker to carve and decorate the gourds. I also use permanent markers for pattern making.

I sell my products to locals, especially older generations who appreciate traditional crafts, and to tourists who buy smaller pieces as souvenirs. I collaborate with farmers who grow the gourds for me.





In the process of work, I use chisels and gravers of different geometry, striving to observe good practices and technologies in our craft. I use a variety of natural materials in my work. The wood I use is mainly walnut, pear, boxwood. Additionally, I use apple, cherry, hawthorn, various exotic woods. The inlays are made of precious metals, mother of pearl, ivory, mammoth bone, etc. For the knife blades I use high quality stainless steel as well as premium Damascus steel. For coating the wood - natural oils on the basis of flax, beeswax and shellac (according to an old recipe).

I have been doing this professionally since I was 26 years old, but it all started much earlier, and developed imperceptibly. Interest turned into passion, which turned into a hobby and eventually became my profession, which I work with this same passion and love. The biggest role played, however, was the chance to learn and master the craft and the opportunity to work with the best in my country.



Evgeni Dimov

Engraver  Bulgaria

FOR ME IT ALL STARTS WITH A PIECE OF PAPER, A PENCIL, GOOD MUSIC, AND A CUP OF COFFEE. I LOVE THIS INITIAL STAGE - THEN ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE





My name is Nino Slepchenko. I am an artist and designer. While experimenting with graphics and drawings I have come up with an idea to create ornaments of the Georgian alphabet. Which is beautiful, it inspires you to work with it, to make art-works using these perfectly shaped letters. So, after years of experimenting and working in 2015 together with my husband Levan Vateishvili, we founded SAINI STUDIO. I developed a special system of creating a great variety of ornaments – each representing one particular letter. These artworks are applied to different design objects and various materials. Our ornaments can be used in the design of a great variety of objects and we can use diverse technologies to be up to date with modern times: ornaments can be applied by decal technology, they can be engraved on glass and other materials, we use energy-efficient bulbs for our lightning and so on.



Nino Slepchenko

Artist and designer  Georgia

BE CONFIDENT, AND TRUST YOURSELF, NEVER GIVE UP.
DON'T BE AFRAID OF OBSTACLES, FOLLOW YOUR IDEA
AND YOUR DREAM TILL THE END,
AND YOU WILL SUCCEED.





Patrizia Magnani

Artist  Italy



I LIKE TO THINK THAT THE BEST IS YET TO COME

I have been doing handicrafts since I was little, little one. My mother, who had an uncommon dexterity, was my example. She taught me everything she knew with a smile and with the kindness that she possessed. I deal with knitting, crochet, loom, sewing and embroidery but my distinctive products are cactus and bonsai in fabric and yarn.

With a continuous study of shapes, colors, dimensions and thanks to the use of different techniques and quality materials, such as furnishing fabrics and fine yarns, my creations all become unique pieces made with love.

I like nature and everything related to it, I teach creative art courses and I love crocheting, so I combined my passions and made it a profession





Metal



My name is Gogi (George) Iakobashvili. I have been in crafts since I was 17. I am casting the bells and making different jewelry. My work starts with an idea, earlier it was followed by numerous sketches. Now with time and experience, I can permit myself to work directly with the material.

I am 65 years already and my works are more traditional than innovative. My works are deeply connected to our traditions. Georgia was distinguished for its production of metalworks, artifacts from the Colchis kingdom (west Georgia) demonstrate advanced skills both in bronze metallurgy and in working with precious metals. Each day I go to my studio I enjoy it; creative process is something that makes me happy. My main materials are silver, copper, and brass when I cast the bells.



Gogi Iakobashvili

Phery Jewelry  Georgia



DO YOUR WORK WITH LOVE, THE REST WILL COME LATER
AS LONG AS WHATEVER YOU ARE WORKING
ON YOU DO WITH LOVE



Ceramic





Andreas Kattos

Ceramist  Cyprus



CERAMIC CRAFT IS THE GATEWAY TO CREATIVITY
AND WORK THERAPY. TO EXCEL IN THIS CRAFT,
ONE MUST LOVE THE CREATIVE PROCESS.

I am a ceramist with 50 years of experience. My job is to create clay sculptures and pottery products.

I use Stoneware clay imported from Europe, which is an environmentally friendly material due to its long-lasting and recyclable features. The tools I use include daily cutlery, self-made tools, and market tools for pottery and sculpting. The furnace and wheel are upgraded when necessary.

I sell my products to tourists who are interested in taking a piece of the history and image of the ceramics art and craft. I do not collaborate with other craftsmen, except for the box makers who create boxes for my creations.





Brigitte Goethals

Ceramist  Belgium

I CONSIDER MYSELF NEITHER AS AN ARTIST
NOR AS A CRAFTSMAN, I STRADDLE THE
TWO DISCIPLINES AND THAT SUITS ME



Around the age of 30 I followed my instinctive desire to create. After several training courses in different artistic expressions (drawing, painting on porcelain, painting on canvas, sculpture), I “found” myself in ceramic art because the expression of it is varied, infinite, and very decorative.

I have my own specificities: I combine ceramic techniques with decorative painting techniques. I don’t work much with enamels; I prefer decorative paints based on pigments and mediums. I mainly work with molds, or by assembling clay slabs. Clay slabs are thin clay sheets, usually made by rolling pins.

I explore ceramics with a lot of curiosity, I seek the limits of the earth, and I let myself be guided by my other passion: decoration. My work is intuitive, I make organic objects, I observe the gesture... Then I look for a link between shape and color. Some parts do not support any color, others require it.

I make unique and tailor-made utilitarian objects, such as dishes, candles, vases, etc... but also I make sculptural artistic objects.





It all probably started in the bottom of my garden when I was very small, making "macocoye" (Liège slang for mud) sculptures, but of course I was not going to live from that. Hence, I graduated from the Saint-Luc School of Fine Arts, Liège, in 1984 and then from 1985 I was a professor in the same school. From 1991-1993 I lived in Tokyo where I studied ceramics, calligraphy, sumi-e, blowing glass techniques and engraving...

Touch after touch, exchange after exchange, experimentation after experimentation... I tried to understand the structure of reality thanks to the earth. My work is organized between structure, destruction and restructure to challenge the balance of matter and thus grasp the essential.

Kilns are used to fire clay pieces, transforming them into ceramic pieces. What is extremely interesting about them is that they come in a variety of sizes and can be used to create a variety of effects

In addition to creating, as part of my career, I had the opportunity to organize exhibitions, workshops, conferences, to participate in selection juries, but also to certify evaluation juries. Moreover, I am a member of the International Academy of Ceramics and since 2021 I am a Co-Founder of the ArtBol cooperative.

Fabienne Withofs

Ceramist  Belgium

OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT
TO BELGIAN CERAMISTS WITH REGARD
TO EVERYDAY OBJECTS; TABLEWARE, WITH
SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON BOWLS





George Pachkoria

Ceramist  Georgia

“ A CERAMIC ARTIST SHOULD STAY
CONCENTRATED, CONFIDENT AND CALM.
KEEP YOUR WORKSHOP CLEAN AND TAKE
YOUR TIME, DO NOT EXPECT
IMMEDIATE RESULTS.



My name is George (Gigisha) Pachkoria. I was born in Tbilisi. I am a ceramist. My interest in ceramics started in early childhood. My father was a painter, he used to bring clay home and I would model different objects.

My coil-building technique is one of a kind. By stretching the vessels from the inside, I hand-build a variety of shapes and textures. I am unusual in that I undertake the entire process all by myself: sourcing clay from open-pit quarries sifting and grinding the raw clay body, to modeling the various shapes, glazing, and firing. My primary subject of interest has always been teapots, as they have unlimited possibilities for improvisation. You can experiment with the shapes of handles, bodies, spouts, and lids.

I attended the training and it was very useful for me. When I was starting my business there was no digital technology, therefore I lack knowledge in this matter. So, any training or workshop that improve my digital skills are very important, needed and highly appreciated



Other





Georgi Todorov

Pipe maker  Bulgaria



WHAT ATTRACTS ME IS THE OPPORTUNITY
TO CREATE A PRODUCT WITH A PURELY
FUNCTIONAL AND AESTHETIC FUNCTION.

IT COMBINES THE BASICS OF MY
EDUCATION (INDUSTRIAL DESIGN) AND
MY LOVE FOR HANDCRAFTED ITEMS.



I am a self taught pipe maker. My craft comes from abroad, specifically from the Czech Republic. Due to its specificity, there are no traditions in our country. It can be said that I am practically a pioneer in its development on a professional basis. What specifically attracted me at the time was the opportunity to create a product with a purely functional and aesthetic function. It combines the basics of my education (industrial design) and my love for handcrafted items. I have mainly been working with Spanish briar in recent years, this is the wood from which the pipe heads are made. For the mouthpieces I use German and Japanese ebonite, acrylics, alternative materials, as well as bamboo, horn, silver to decorate the neck of the pipe.

The process usually begins with sketching. This is the moment when I think about the image I want to create, proportions. Then follows the selection of the correct block of wood and material for the mouthpiece, which is then shaped with the help of a bandsaw. This is followed by manual sanding with different sandpapers and a finish according to the idea.





Irina Kiasashvili

Leather accessories designer

 Georgia



My name is Irina (Iko) Kiasashvili. I am a leather accessories designer. Initially, it was just a hobby for me, and only later did it grow into a business. I love handicrafts, and since childhood, I have been knitting, tailoring, and embroidering. I guess this love of handicrafts turned me towards leather at some point. At first, I was making different accessories for myself. Later my family members and friends got interested in my designs and per their request, I started making accessories for them. Gradually this hobby of mine turned into a business. I am using double needle stitching to hand saw the leather.

I attended the training and it was extremely beneficial for me in lots of ways. Thanks to the training I updated my FB and Instagram pages and it attracted new customers.



LOVE YOUR CRAFT BE DEVOTED





This adventure in chocolate making started recently at a time when I was financially bad and feeling disillusioned and useless. I was determined to create something of my own and do something. I decided to experiment with making chocolates. It all started with small moulds, and then I started mixing different flavours and textures, like salt and orange peel.

To develop my skills, I attended some courses on how to make chocolates. There I saw the techniques they used, and wrote down the most important points, for example, how the temperature of the chocolate should be... This was how I started to learn the techniques I needed to start. It began with my family and friends, and then word of mouth helped me begin to sell.

I use confectioner's sleeves, tongs, knives, and moulds. The knife is not the most suitable; I have to use a scalpel; it is more dangerous but renders the chocolate more easily.

Chocolate making ends up being only a seasonal job since I can't do it during the summer. During this time, I dedicate myself to creating decorative flowers to decorate the boxes with the chocolates during the rest of the year. I use only recycled materials, fabric scraps and other "waste" materials to create these.

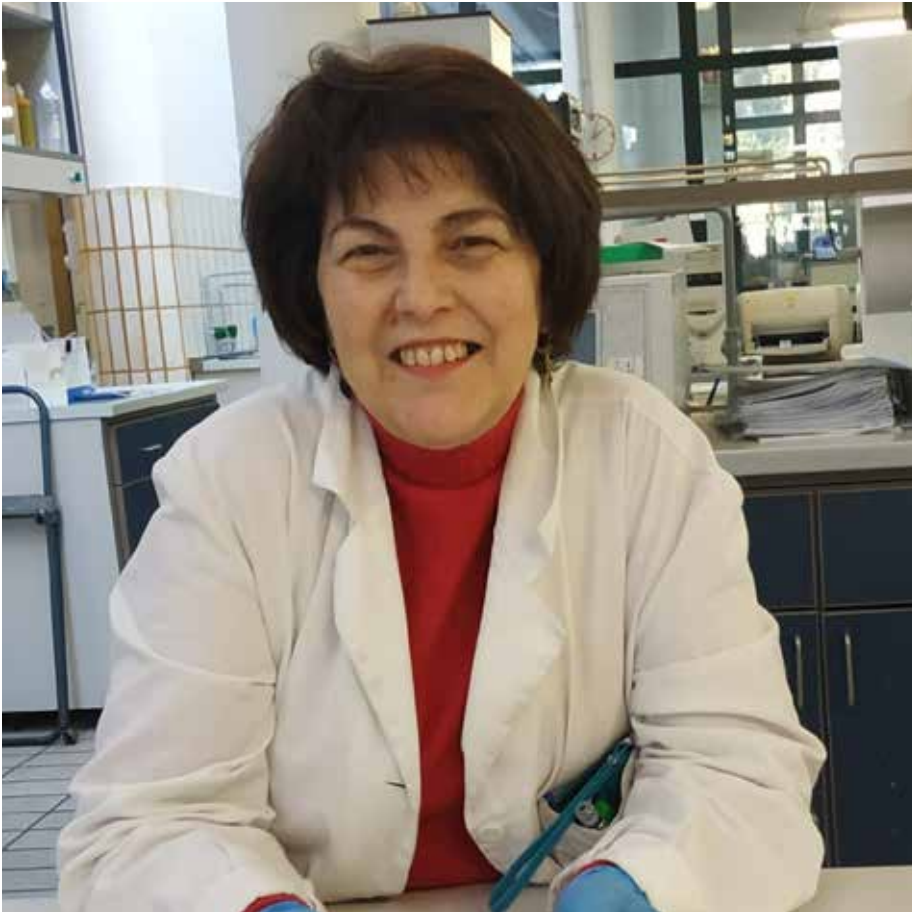
Isabel Silva Martines

Chocolates confectioner 📍 Portugal



I FEEL MOTIVATED TO LEARN AND
FEEL USEFUL IN CREATING
CHOCOLATES WITH INNOVATIVE FLAVOURS





I have been making handmade and cold-processed natural soap based on olive oil and aloe vera for about 20 years. I prepare the formula on the basis of the result I want to achieve, and then balance the ingredients to obtain benefits in terms of cleansing and skin care. In the chemical reaction of cold saponification, the technique exploits the natural heat produced by the exothermic reaction of oil with caustic soda. Besides local ingredients such as olive oil, aloe vera and essential oils, I use tools that help me in the process. In particular, I use the mixer, which allows me to obtain a homogeneous and well-processed result. At the end I put the processed soap in the silicone moulds so that they mature and after few weeks are ready for use. I therefore obtain smooth soaps with the imaginative shapes that I prefer or that are requested. My handmade soaps are particularly suitable for those with delicate skin, with sores, acne or irritations, or for those who can't stand industrial soaps and prefer products made by hand and with natural and sustainable ingredients.

Maria Cristina Fodde

Handmade natural soap artisan

 Italy



DO YOU WANT A CLEANER WORLD?
START WITH NATURAL SOAP





Olga Keller

Leather worker 📍 Romania



ALWAYS WORK WITH PASSION



Making a leather bag is not an easy job at all. First of all, every material is selected manually, with the utmost care, starting with fine leather and the material used for the lining, to buckles, metal details, belts or any other accessories that have the role of giving an identity to each bag.

A difficult process is staining. Certain techniques are used to give a uniform color over the entire surface of the material, and there is also a special technique used to highlight the natural granulation of the skin. All these processes are done manually, which is why every piece of material is unique and has a special value.

Sometimes, due to the overlapping of different materials, the leather becomes too thick, so you have to undertake the process of thinning the leather.

The next step is to assemble the bag: namely, all parts, including the furnaces, are joined together. To ensure durability and robustness, reinforcement is put on the back of the bag.



Olga Leather



Simona Mazzi

Watercolourist 📍 Italy



PAINTING IS PEACE.
PEACE WITH ME AND WITH EVERYTHING
I DON'T LIKE.



My Akue kete project took shape in 1997 when my paintings began to leave my rooms and enter those of others.

I propose watercolours in which I capture moments of stillness, timeless landscapes. The paper welcomes my hands, my brushstrokes welcome your glances that flow onto works of various formats: cards, bookmarks, landscapes and flowers enclosed in small tiles, rampant flows of colour on large papers.

And trees, many trees, to have roots firmly in the ground but fronds and branches free to wander in Akue kete.



Conclusions

Craft50+ has been an amazing journey across the rich variety of handcraft creative expression that Europe can offer. The heritage that older craftsmen bring with them in terms of knowledge, skills and transmission of cultural history of their countries is immeasurable.

On the other hand, this richness is risking to get lost if it is not able to communicate itself, to reach a broader number of customers across Europe and all over the world and ultimately if those who own it are not able to update it to the current socio-economic context which is strongly based on digital resources.

Craft50+ tried to tackle this challenge by acknowledging, supporting and empowering senior craftsmen and the value they bring with them.

We sincerely hope that the resources we developed will be exploited all across Europe, reaching out to more and more beneficiaries, but also that they will contribute to highlight to younger generations the incredible history upon which they can build the future of craftsmanship.

Notes and credits:

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Other pictures included in this document were provided by craftwomen and craftsmen involved in the project.

